

Notice of Allowability

Application No.	Applicant(s)	
10/789,159	OCHIYA ET AL.	
Examiner	Art Unit	
Lora E. Barnhart	1651	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. This communication is responsive to applicant's reply received 7/19/07.
2. The allowed claim(s) is/are 1-3,6-9 and 22.
3. Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) All
 - b) Some*
 - c) None of the:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* Certified copies not received: _____.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.
THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

4. A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
5. CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
 - (a) including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
 - 1) hereto or 2) to Paper No./Mail Date _____.
 - (b) including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date _____.

Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
6. DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

1. Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2. Notice of Draftperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3. Information Disclosure Statements (PTO/SB/08),
Paper No./Mail Date _____
4. Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit
of Biological Material
5. Notice of Informal Patent Application
6. Interview Summary (PTO-413),
Paper No./Mail Date _____.
7. Examiner's Amendment/Comment
8. Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance
9. Other _____.

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Kevin Bastian on 9/25/07.

The application has been amended as follows:

Replace claim 1 in its entirety with the following:

--- 1. A method for inducing differentiation of mesenchymal stem cells to hepatocytes comprising

(a) culturing the mesenchymal stem cells in a medium comprising acidic fibroblast growth factor, fibroblast growth factor 4, and hepatocyte growth factor; and then

(b) culturing the cells cultured in step (a) in a medium comprising oncostatin M, thereby differentiating the mesenchymal stem cells into hepatocytes. ---

Cancel claims 4 and 5.

Replace claim 6 in its entirety with the following:

--- 6. A method for inducing differentiation of embryonic stem cells to hepatocytes comprising

(a) culturing the embryonic stem cells in a medium comprising retinoic acid, leukemia inhibitory factor, and hepatocyte growth factor; and then

Art Unit: 1651

(b) culturing the cells cultured in step (a) in a medium comprising acidic fibroblast growth factor, fibroblast growth factor 4, and hepatocyte growth factor; and then
(c) culturing the cells cultured in step (b) in a medium comprising oncostatin M, thereby differentiating the embryonic stem cells into hepatocytes. - - -

In claim 8, line 2, replace the word "pluripotent" with - - - mesenchymal stem - - -.

Cancel claims 11-14.

Replace claim 22 in its entirety with the following:

- - - 22. The method of claim 1 or 6 wherein the hepatocytes are mature hepatocytes.

Claims 1-3, 6-9, and 22 are allowed.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Lora E. Barnhart whose telephone number is 571-272-1928. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Thursday, 9:00am - 5:30pm.

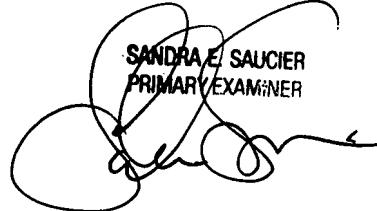
If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Michael G. Wityshyn can be reached on 571-272-0926. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Art Unit: 1651

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

Lora E Barnhart

les


SANDRA E. SAUCIER
PRIMARY EXAMINER